

CHARLESTON

FIRE DEPARTMENT



Cold Weather Safety Tips

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Charleston, SC (January 19, 2016): With cold temperatures in our immediate forecast, the Charleston Fire Department wants you to stay safe while staying warm. According to the National Fire Protection Association, over half of all home heating fires occur in December, January, and February.

“As the temperature drops we begin to experience a higher number of home fires, both locally and nationally,” said Community Educator Ryan Kunitzer. “Each winter season, home fires increase in part due to heating and cooking fires. Fire safety and injury prevention must not be lost in an effort to stay warm.”

Consider these tips for the upcoming colder weather:

- Furnaces, fireplaces, and chimneys should be routinely cleaned and inspected by a qualified technician.
- Space heaters, furnaces, and fireplaces should not be within 3 feet of any combustibles.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Dispose of fireplace ashes in a metal container and place the container away from combustible materials or construction for 2-3 days before disposal. Never place hot ashes in the trash.
- Allow kerosene heaters to cool and remove them to the outdoors before refueling.
- Never use your oven or stove for heating purposes.

Help prepare your family:

- Install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. Remember, carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas. Carbon monoxide alarms are NOT a substitute for smoke alarms.
- Plan ahead! Develop and practice an escape plan with your family.
- Make sure a smoke alarm is on every level of your home, inside and outside of each sleeping areas. Test smoke alarm batteries monthly.

If you have any type of emergency, please do not hesitate to dial 9-1-1. If you have any questions on cold weather or heating safety, please contact Community Educator Ryan Kunitzer at 843-958-6401 or by email at kunitzerr@charleston-sc.gov.

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